

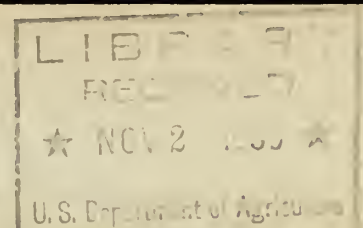
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Back to School



A radio interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Thursday, September 28, 1939, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 104 associate radio stations.

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WALLACE KADDERLY:

And now Ruth Van Deman, your home economics reporter, with another batch of news.....this time news about school lunches.

And I'd like to throw in just a word here on my own...a word of fellow-feeling for the youngsters I've seen going to school these bright warm September days. Not that I've noticed any of them looking unhappy about the return to school. But I know how hard it is to concentrate indoors while it's still summer out on the ball field and under the trees.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

You've got a touch of nostalgia, Wallace....just like Mr. Shakespeare.

KADDERLY:

Mr. Shakespeare?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, a gentleman who lived in England, and wrote poetry.

KADDERLY:

Yes, I have--or had--a bowing acquaintance with him I think....lived at a place called Stratford-on-Avon.

VAN DEMAN:

The same. Then probably you remember his remark about the school boy..... "The school boy with his satchel and shining morning face, creeping like snail unwillingly to school."

KADDERLY:

"Creeping like snail unwillingly to school"....True enough. The world doesn't change very fast in some ways after all.

VAN DEMAN:

No, come fall we all find it a big hard to pull ourselves back to indoor jobs....Well, even if Wallace Kadderly does sigh for the good old days, we certainly have managed to make schools more inviting--or maybe I should say less uninviting--in some ways.

This matter of school lunches, for instance. We make big progress on that every year. Right now, this fall, there are more Parent Teacher organizations than ever organizing school lunch projects....more school boards are getting interested....more Red Cross chapters making plans to help under-privileged children get a good meal at noon every school day.

(over)

The Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation is going right ahead with its school lunch program as announced in August. How far it will reach depends on cooperation in the local communities....school boards, WPA, welfare organizations of one kind and another. They have to work out the plans for serving the lunches. The FSCC supplies the food--the kind of food youngsters need to keep them growing and healthy....dairy and poultry products, fruits and vegetables, whole-grain cereals....the "protective" foods that are in abundance in this country.

If this all goes along as planned, between now and the time school closes next spring maybe as many as five million children will get the benefit....children who would otherwise be undernourished.

When it comes to getting a school lunch-room running, of course there's no one master plan that will fit everywhere. Each community has to work out its own. And many can tell wonderful stories of what they've accomplished, starting almost on a shoestring.

I've just been reading the story of what happened about the school lunch in Roanoke, Virginia, last winter. The write-up was signed by a nutritionist with the Red Cross. But I think just about everybody in Roanoke must have had a finger in that school lunch pie before the winter was over. The churches, the theaters, some 30 social and civic organizations got together and helped.

As a result nearly a thousand children from under-privileged families had a good substantial lunch every school day. And everybody noticed the change in the children. Ones who were underweight and pale began to fill out and get rosy cheeks. One youngster gained 20 pounds. And his eyesight improved so much he was able to leave off his glasses.

Even the juvenile court and the probation officer saw a difference. They had fewer cases of petty thieving, because youngsters weren't tempted to steal food from the market. And school attendance was much better.

..... Of course what happened in Roanoke is happening in thousands of other towns, and cities, and rural communities...all over the country.

Now to help along such good work, the Bureau of Home Economics prepared a set of menus and recipes....in form for the teacher or the lunch-room manager to use. The recipes are in quantity to serve 50 school children--large quantity recipes, but simple enough to prepare. Most of them to be cooked on top of the stove. They don't call for any fancy equipment or high-priced foods, cheap and nourishing is the idea.

I'm sure I've mentioned this bulletin with "Menus and receipts for lunches at school" a time or two before. But this fall it fits in particularly well with the new school lunch plan under the FSCC. It's available to any teacher or any leader of a school lunch project. It's not for the individual mother though. The receipts are in pounds, and quarts, and gallons...to serve 50 children...not the youngsters who come home to lunch at noon recess or who carry lunch packed at home in the morning. That's another story.

And, I think we'll let that story go on to another day.

KADDERLY:

Well, Ruth, while you've been talking I've been glancing through this bulletin. And I see a receipt here for molasses cookies....enough molasses cookies to provide 50 youngsters with one apiece. But I suppose if I say anything about the fragrance, to a boy's nose....the tantalizing fragrance of molasses cookies warm from the oven, you'll be accusing me of more nostalgia.

VAN DEMAN:

Certainly. Oh, to be a boy again, eating half moons in a fresh molasses cookie--

KADDERLY:

Well, anyway, Farm and Home friends----- (offer the Bulletin and how to get it).

